

***Teaching, Modeling, and Imparting Responsiveness to the Holy Spirit for Life and Ministry.*****TEACHING:****The Gift of Yourself***by Mike Flynn*

As we gear up for Christmas we of course start thinking about gifts. The more special a person is the more time, thought, and energy we put into the gifts we give him/her. Then, a little down the priority list are numerous gifts which are expressions of appreciation. Further down the list are some gifts which are mere social conventions--expected among the polite. And behind every gift is our personhood; something of our selves goes into each gift. Our personhood, however, is in the background, hardly noticed by some givers and some receivers. In fact, all the stuff of Christmas makes it easy to keep our personhood in the background.

But, following the lead of our heavenly Father, I would like to propose that we think about giving ourselves. It once occurred to me that the Father took His heart into His hands, fashioned it into a tiny child, and sent that gift to earth by way of a teenaged mother named Mary. Jesus surely was the heart of the Father, the most precious part of His very Self. Now His gift was very specially wrapped: a virgin mother, hoards of singing angels, gift-bearing wise men, etc. But it was Himself that was the primary gift. As C.S. Lewis observed, "God can't give us happiness and peace apart from Himself because there is no such thing."

He Himself is happiness and peace.

What is it to give oneself? There are layers to the answer of this question. It might help to categorize ourselves as three concentric circles of body, soul, and spirit. The outermost layer, the body, is the physical dimension of ourselves. We give ourselves on this level to others with handshakes, hugs, smiles, attentive looks, and physically spending time with them. When we do this we're saying, "you are worth my attention."

The soul, the middle layer, is made up of mind, will, and emotions. The gift of ourselves on this level means the sharing of those aspects with others. The gift of your mind is the sharing of your knowledge, your opinions, your ideational creativity. The gift of your will is the sharing of your decisions, your beliefs, your determinations. The gift of your emotions is the sharing of how you feel about various things. This is starting to get much more significant. Your real self is beginning to get revealed and expressed when you do this. And, part of the gift of soul is to listen to others as they express their thoughts, beliefs, and feelings. Listening is a huge gift to others.

Your spirit is at the center of who you are. It is the essence of who you are. You are a spirit who has a soul and lives in a body. Your spirit is that part of you made in the image of God, Who is Spirit. There are three generally recognized functions that the spirit performs: communion, intuition, and

conscience. Communion is connecting with others at the deepest level. It is oneness, if I can coin a term. That is, it is something you do-and-are at the same time with others.

Intuition is transrational connecting with God. It is transrational because God Himself is way beyond the ability of the intellect alone to comprehend Him. The thing He has put in us that can connect anyway is our spirit, and intuition is a word to describe the ability to connect with, hear, and understand Him even though He is beyond the intellect's ability to do those things. Sharing on an intuitional level can be life-changing for both speaker and hearer.

The final function of our spirit is conscience, which is the ability to respond to God's morals even if we've convinced our minds that we've done nothing wrong. Some of the deepest connecting I've done with others has been when I shared a matter of conscience with them.

Now, what does it take to make the gift

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of yourself? First, it takes some self-knowledge. Who are you, anyway? What do you look like? What do you think? What are some things you feel strongly about? What road have you determined to walk?

Second, it takes courage. There's always the chance that someone you share yourself with will misunderstand your offer or scorn it or ignore it. Ouch! But there's no true advancement in life without some risk. But remember that courage is not an act of the emotions but of the will. You just have to make the decision to do it and then do it.

Third, it takes a recipient. Who would you be willing to share yourself with? Family should normally come first on the list. It is amazing how many people have not shared themselves deeply with close family members. Sometimes people need to try this out on friends first and then do it with family.

Fourth, it helps to telegraph ahead. You might say something like this: "[Name], I am trying to do something new by sharing my self with others at new levels. Would you be willing to have coffee with me on Tuesday and let me try this out?" This alerts the other/s that you're serious about something, which helps them take it appropriately.

Lastly, it takes faith. God is the God of relationships. Faith in His ability to make relationships work is important. Maybe, in fact, what you should share is your faith. Have you told others what the Lord means to you? Have you shared answers to prayer? and matters of conscience? or questions of doctrine?

You are worth giving. But you may

not know that until you give the gift. America is full of people who invest themselves in all kinds of activities but who are essentially lonely. Your gift of yourself will go a long way towards helping people get to know themselves.

Bits of Feedback

Note: we include feedback in order to reward our intercessors and donors who enable this ministry to be effective.

"Our Diocesan Historiographer, Betty L. (82 years of age), went up for healing prayer Friday night after evensong. On Saturday morning she testified before the whole Synod that she had been healed of severe arthritic pain in her knees which she has experienced from when she was in her twenties and which had advanced to the degree that she was fearful she might not be able to be ambulatory much longer. Thanks to your good ministry amongst us we are 'claiming the vitality of the early Church' and becoming what God wants His Church to be." --Bishop Peter Beckwith, Diocese of Springfield (re: people we had trained)

"Hi Mike: I met you at Siang Yang's retreat this summer and had a chat with you at the hotel lobby. You prayed for the healing of my diabetes. I took one of your books. I just want you to know that your prayer of healing worked and my diabetes all of a sudden got better and had to decrease my insulin. Wow, you are truly powerful and your direct line to God rings loud and clear and God answered your prayer." --Judge Gloria Dunn

"From my heart I felt I should say thank you for the wonderful work you did in our healing ministry conference in Mbarara (Uganda). Thank you for your prayer for we

are pushing on well. Our Diocesan Mission Coordinator--Rev. James--is doing well with us in organizing healing programme in our four centres. ... People really need healing and the hand of God is acting whenever we pray for the sick. Some with demonic forces have been healed and even the deaf have been able to hear. Praise be to His name and honour and glory be to Him.” --Rev. Enos Komunda, Diocese of Kinkiizi [Note: Rev. James, who he speaks of, has trained over 1200 ministry team members in 200 churches.]

“I can’t thank you enough for the training you offered at Eastminster Presbyterian Church. One person said his wife had back pain. He rebuked it for about 20 minutes and it left. Another talked about rebuking a cold one day which seemed gone the next. When symptoms reappeared, she thanked God He had healed her and the symptoms left.” --Julie Boys

“Thank you so much for being such an anointed servant of the Lord to us this weekend! We have all been

deeply touched and blessed by the Holy Spirit through you! Our love, support, and prayer are with you and Sue and your team as you continue to serve the Lord and minister to many lives all over the world in Him and for Him, and for His Kingdom.” --Rev. Siang Yang, Fuller Seminary professor and author and senior pastor of First Evangelical Church in Glendale, CA.

These elements proved to be helpful to us: “The calm & peaceful manner in which Mike teaches and models! The personal stories & the ministry times. Mike’s servant attitude & willingness to be available.” --Pastor Tom Cheng.

“Dear Fr. Mike, You have been such a blessing to the mission to Tanzania and to me. The instruction you provided worked so well as we ministered to large numbers of people; we also benefited greatly from the insight and experience you so willingly shared. The wisdom God has given you He has used to make a difference for His Kingdom once more. ... So many lives were changed for all eternity and the mission was only

the beginning of what God is going to do in those places. Thank you so much for being a part and sharing so freely.” --Gail Patton, Sharing of Ministries Abroad

“Fr Mike, want you to know your books are some of the best teaching books I’ve ever read and I’ve been reading this type of books for over 30 years. God bless you.” --Bill Woods

“Praise you, Lord God, our Father, for intervening in Mike’s life, heart and soul 35 years ago (referring to his baptism in the Spirit). Bless you, bless you, bless you for all the times and places and moments of preaching, pastoring, ministry, writing you have shown up through Mike over the many years and touched, healed, saved another soul needy for Jesus and your love and mercy and power. Thank, esp., Lord, for how you touch me thru Mike’s ministry past, present and future. Keep coming Holy Spirit, you are an Amazing God AMEN Alleluia!!!” --Rev. Brewster Hastings



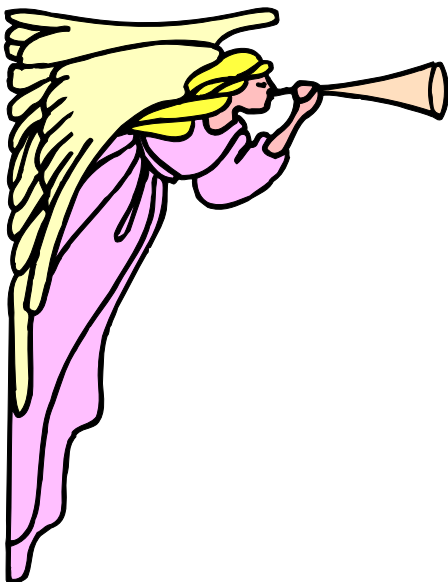
Merry Christmas from Mike and Sue

Credit Card Capability

FreshWind's Board of Directors recently authorized the capability to utilize credit cards for people who want to register for FreshWind events or to donate to the ministry. Therefore there is a form for doing so on the back page.

Healing Course, Phase I

This month those on our mailing and email lists have received a brochure detailing a jointly presented course by FreshWind and the Camarillo Vineyard. This is the course material we have presented 4 times in Uganda and which the Lord has used to spark a virtual firestorm of healing activity in that country. We urge you to prayerfully consider attending, OR, to consider inviting FreshWind to your area to put the course on there. The course is in 2 phases, the 2nd about 5 months later than the 1st: this gives Phase I participants the opportunity to try out what they've learned back home before learning more advanced matters.



Leaders Corner

Accountability

Ted Haggard's fall from grace reminds us of the need for accountability relationships. Let me offer some quick, challenging thoughts on the subject.

Accountability suggests the lateral, horizontal aspect of life.

- We're accountable to other people.
we count to them (matter) and we count to them (itemize).
- These people need to have some authority in relation to us, which we give them.
- It involves trust of those to whom we're accountable.
- also respect

Accountability presupposes love and acceptance (if you don't love me, I won't level with you).

Accountability presupposes a desire to be well.

Accountability presupposes a determination to relate.

Accountability requires honesty, trust, courage in the one being held accountable.

Accountability requires trustworthiness, discretion, largeness of heart in those holding accountable.

Accountability promotes balance, health, teamness in the sense of not-being-alone.

Accountability is not an adversarial but a parakletial relationship.

Accountability's areas of concern are:

- sin
 - responsibility--to agreed upon criteria
 - growth
 - health
- i.e. the tough stuff.

Accountability allows us to be agents of each other's growth and freedom.

Accountability recognizes that none of us is a capable judge of ourselves.

Accountability provides an on-going opportunity to get real, to become truthful, to face our spiritual enemies, to lay hold of the grace to change what should be changed.

Accountability realizes that I can hold off God all day long, but I really start to deal when I tell you,

and that God is the author of this dynamic.

Accountability says "I give you permission to ask tough questions"

- "Have you done what you said you were going to do?" "Why?" "Why not?"
- and the toughest and last question is, "Have you just lied to me?"

Accountability in the church is an opportunity to grow through a relationship that no other relationship on earth provides. No other relationship provides the combination of grace, honesty, forgiveness, forbearance, hope, and power which this can provide.

The goal of Accountability is not success but growth, not perfection but improvement, not flying solo but as part of the flock.

May I suggest a New Year's resolution to get an accountability partner?

Responses

FreshWind often donates its time and energy to foreign and domestic churches and organizations that cannot afford to pay normal honoraria and travel expenses. Many of these are missions-focused, as is FreshWind.

About 75% of FreshWind's budget comes from people like you who believe in and feel led to support what we're doing to extend the kingdom.

Here's the bottom line:

+ renewed, disciplined, and anointed people produce ministry and mission

+ FreshWind produces renewed, disciplined and anointed followers

We ask you to help us "produce" FreshWind.

We highly value all forms of aid: prayer, finances, and ministry team participation. Please look over this response form and see if the Lord would speak to you about your support of this ministry.

PRAYER:

If you would like to receive Mike's monthly Intercessor's letter and pray regularly for this ministry, please log onto www.freshwindministries.org and click on the "Contact" heading. In the box for questions or comments, please state you'd like to receive the letter.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

+ I/we pledge: \$_____ per month for the support of FreshWind Ministries. I understand that FreshWind is a 501(c) (3) religious non-profit corporation and that I will receive regular IRS-approved statements for tax deduction purposes.

+ I do not feel that the Lord is leading me to pledge regularly at this time, but I want to send a one-time gift of \$_____.

Please make contribution checks to FreshWind Ministries. Thank you.

Or:

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*How To Be Good Without Really Trying, Letting Jesus Live
His Life In You. \$13*

Making Disciples, Following Jesus' Model. \$5

The Mustard Seed Book, Understanding and using effective faith. \$10

Inner Healing, A handbook for helping yourself and others. \$14

Holy Vulnerability, The risks and rewards of opening up to God. \$12

All 5 books, \$41 (a 25% discount) \$44 in California includes sales tax

Plus \$2 shipping for the first book and \$1 for each added book

*Make checks out to Mike Flynn.
Contact Mike at mkfln@aol.com to order.*